

CHAPTER VII.

AN ERA OF PEACE; PIONEER SETTLEMENTS.

From 1763 to 1773.

1. Expedition of General Henry Boquet.—The war which had raged furiously for years was now drawing to a close. During its continuance more than a thousand families on the Virginia frontier—now mainly West Virginia—and of Pennsylvania, had been murdered and driven from their homes. General Boquet left Philadelphia with a force of 500 men, and after defeating the Indians at Bushy Run, Pennsylvania, reached Fort Pitt in 1764. With his force increased to 1,500 men, among whom were many West Virginia pioneers, he marched into the Ohio wilderness, and, at the forks of the Muskingum, he concluded a treaty with the Indians, who delivered 206 captives, 90 of whom had been carried away from what is now West Virginia.

2. Peace on the Border.—Boquet's army returned to Fort Pitt and peace was established. The ten years through which it continued has been called "the halcyon decade of the eighteenth century." By the terms of the treaty at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which was afterward ratified by the British ministry, it was declared that "the country to the west of the Alleghenies is allowed to the Indians for their hunting

grounds." In compliance with this, the King of England, on October 7th, 1763, issued a proclamation forbidding all persons to hunt or settle to the westward of the Alleghanies, and Boquet, on his return to Fort Pitt, proclaimed a like order. But the tide of immigration flowed westward, and neither royal proclamation nor military orders could stop it.

3. Settlement and Fate of the Echarly Brothers.

—Even while the war continued, daring men were seeking homes in West Virginia. In 1756, Dr. Thomas Echarly and two brothers, Germans from Pennsylvania, came to the valley of the Monongahela, and after extended exploration, reared their cabins on Dunkard bottom on Cheat river, now in Preston county, a few miles south of Kingwood. Here they resided for two or three years, when Dr. Echarly left the brothers in the wilderness home, and journeyed to the East to obtain a supply of ammunition and salt. This was obtained in the lower part of the Shenandoah Valley, and on his return he stopped at Fort Pleasant on the South Branch, where the story of his residence on Cheat river was not believed. He was thought to be a spy in the service of the French, and a guard was sent with him into the wilderness. When the cabin was reached the brothers were found murdered and scalped. The savages had committed the deed. Thus ended in disaster the first attempt to settle the valley of Cheat river.

4. The Dockers Attempt a Settlement on Monongahela River.

—The first attempt at a settlement on the Monongahela was made in 1758. In that year

Thomas Decker and others began a settlement at the mouth of Decker's Creek which empties into the Monongahela near the present site of Morgantown. Here the winter was spent, but the next year a band of Delaware and Mingo warriors attacked the settlement and put nearly all the inhabitants to death.

5. Adventurers from Fort Pitt in the West Virginia Wilderness.—In the year 1761, William Childers, John Lindsey, John Pringle and Samuel Pringle left Fort Pitt, and, ascending the Monongahela river, passed over to the Youghiogheny, where they spent the winter. The next spring the Pringle brothers, having separated from the others, journeyed eastward until they reached the Looney Creek settlement, now in Grant county, and then the most western outpost of civilization. Again entering the wilderness, they made their homes in the glades of what is now Preston county until 1764, when they were employed as hunters by John Simpson, a trapper from the South Branch of the Potomac. At the Horseshoe Bend of Cheat river, a dispute arose and a separation took place.

6. The First Cabin Where Clarksburg Now Stands.—Simpson passed over the mountains and crossed Tygart's Valley river at the mouth of Pleasant Creek, now in Taylor county, and then journeyed over to another stream, to which he gave the name of Simpson's creek. Farther on he came upon another stream, a tributary of the West Fork of the Monongahela, on which he bestowed the name of Elk Creek, and at the mouth of which he reared his cabin and here

continued to reside, until permanent settlements began to be made around him. Simpson's cabin was the first home of civilized man on the present site of Clarksburg.

7. The Pringles on Buckhannon River.—The Pringles also reached Tygart's Valley river up which they proceeded to the mouth of the Buckhannon river,



SHADE OF THE PRINGLE BROTHERS.

and thence up that stream until they came to the mouth of Turkey Run, three miles below the present town of Buckhannon, in Upsher county. Here they halted and took up their abode in the cavity of a large sycamore tree. They continued their solitary residence at this place until 1767, when John left his brother and made a journey to the South Branch for ammunition,

and when he returned he brought news of the close of the French and Indian War nearly five years before. Both now went to the South Branch and brought a number of settlers to the valley of Buckhannon river.

8. The First English Expedition Descends the Ohio.—Early in 1765, the first English expedition descended the Ohio river. It was commanded by Colonel George Crogan, of Pennsylvania, and was sent out for the purpose of exploring the country adjacent to the Ohio river, and of conciliating the Indian nations which had hitherto taken part with the French. On the 15th day of May, 1765, the expedition left Fort Pitt with two batteaux. On the 17th they passed the present site of Wheeling, and on the 22d they were at the mouth of the Great Kanawha. The voyage continued to the Falls of the Ohio, and Crogan, having accomplished the object of his mission, returned by way of the Great Lakes to Niagara.

9. A Definite Boundary Line between the Indians and Virginia.—A definite boundary line was now sought by both the Indians and the Virginians. Governor John Blair, in his message to the House of Burgesses of Virginia, May 31st, 1768, said: "A set of men regardless of the laws of natural justice, * * * and in contempt of royal proclamation, have dared to settle themselves upon the lands near Cheat river, which are the property of the Indians." The same year the Six Nations, in an address to Colonel Crogan, said of these lands, "It is time enough to settle them when you have purchased them and the country becomes yours."

10. Treaty of Fort Stanwix.—A request went over-sea, and the British government ordered Sir William Johnson, its Superintendent of Indian Affairs, to at once complete the purchase of the lands from the Alleghanies to the Ohio river. Upon receipt of these instructions, Colonel Johnson gave notice of a Congress to be held at Fort Stanwix, now Rome, New York. The Governments of Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, and also the Six Nations, were requested to send representatives. This was done, and the delegates assembled on October 24th, 1768, Sir William Johnson presiding.

11. All West Virginia Ceded to the King of England.—The right and title of the Indians to the territory in question was maintained with all the eloquence of forest orators. The Colonial Commissioners admitted the same, and tendered a sum of money and goods aggregating in value the sum of ten thousand four hundred and sixty pounds, seven shillings and three pence in payment therefor. The offer was accepted and the deed of cession signed and delivered. The territory thus ceded, of which West Virginia was a part, was bounded on the west by a line beginning at the mouth of the Tennessee river and running thence with the south bank of the Ohio river to Kaniawing, above Fort Pitt.

12. The Original Indiana Territory.—A reservation was made by the Indians at the above treaty to satisfy a claim of an association of Philadelphia merchants for goods, which the Indians had destroyed on the Ohio in 1763. At Fort Stanwix, they executed a

deed in settlement of this claim for all the lands bounded by a line beginning at the mouth of the Little Kanawha river and running thence to Laurel Hill, and thence with said Laurel Hill to the Monongahela river, and thence to the southern boundary line of Pennsylvania, thence due north to the Ohio river, and thence with that river to the place of beginning. This land, afterwards known as the Indiana Territory, was the cause of much litigation. A suit was brought against Virginia which finally resulted in the adoption of the Eleventh Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

13. Homes Established in the Wilderness.—The cession of what is now West Virginia to the English by the treaty of Fort Stanwix, led to a renewed effort to settle the wilderness west of the mountains. In 1768 Zackwell Morgan and others settled on the Monongahela where Morgantown now stands. In 1769 a number of families again settled in Greenbrier, the distinguished Colonel John Stewart, then a youth of but nineteen years, coming with them. The same year James Clark and John Judy found homes on Big Sandy Creek, now in Preston county, and John Wetzel and the Siverts and Calverts secured their cabins on the highlands in what is now Sand Hill District, Marshall county. The Virginia land office records show how rapidly these West Virginia lands were being appropriated at this time. Twelve settlement rights were issued in 1769, and forty-nine, each for 400 acres, in 1770, on the waters of the Monongahela alone.

14. The Mississippi Company.—In 1768, a great corporation made an effort to secure a grant of land in which all of West Virginia west of the mountains was included. In December of the above named year, Arthur Lee, late Commissioner to the Court of France from the United Colonies, presented a petition to the King of England on behalf of himself and forty-nine others, asking that a grant be made to them for 2,500,000 acres of land, to be located between the thirty-eighth and forty-seventh degrees of north latitude, the Alleghany mountains on the east and the Ohio river on the west. This petition, which is still preserved in England, was referred to the Board of Trade, which body appears never to have made a report thereon.

15. George Washington Surveys Lands on the Ohio.—Under the provisions of Governor Dinwiddie's Proclamation of 1754, Virginians serving in the French and Indian War were entitled to patents for western lands. Colonel Washington and his men were among these, and in 1770, he made a journey to the Ohio for the purpose of locating some of the lands. He left Mount Vernon on the 5th of October and spent the night of the 9th at Romney, Hampshire county. Reaching Pittsburg on the 17th, he, with several others, began the descent of the Ohio river on the 20th. On the last day of October, the party encamped on the site of the present town of Point Pleasant, now in Mason county, and the next day proceeded up the Great Kanawha, for the purpose of examining the lands along that river. A month

was spent in surveying and in that time more than one hundred thousand acres were surveyed in the valley of the Great Kanawha and on the south bank of the Ohio. When the work was completed all returned home, Washington reaching Mount Vernon on the first day of December.

16. Western Settlement Continued. — In the spring of 1770, Ebenezer Zane and his two brothers, Jonathan and Silas, planted the first corn grown where the city of Wheeling now stands; Joseph Tomlinson reared his cabin on the Grave Creek Flats near the present site of Moundsville, in Marshall county; and a daring frontiersman of the name of Tygart, found a home at the mouth of Middle Island creek now in Pleasants county. In 1772, James Booth and John Thomas became the first settlers within the present limits of Marion county, they having established themselves at Booth's creek in that year. In 1773, James and Thomas Parsons came from the South Branch Valley, near where Moorefield, in Hardy county, now stands, and settled at the Horseshoe Bend, now in Tucker county, and the same year, if not earlier, Leonard Morris became the first permanent settler in the Great Kanawha Valley, rearing his cabin near the present site of Brownstown, in Kanawha county.

17. The Church of England in West Virginia. — The Church of England was the established Church of Virginia before the Revolutionary War, the Colony being divided into parishes, usually, though not always, identical with the counties in which they

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RUINS OF OLD TRINITY CHURCH, NORBORNE PARISH.
NEAR CHARLESTOWN, JEFFERSON COUNTY.

Jefferson, Berkeley and Hampshire counties in West Virginia. In 1769, Norborne Parish was formed from that of Frederick, within which Morgan Morgan had established the first Church in West Virginia at what is now the little town of Bunker Hill, in Berkeley county. Soon after, other churches were established at Shepherdstown and Charlestown in what is now Jefferson county. Hampshire Parish was formed in 1753, and Hardy Parish taken from it in 1785. Thus it is seen that the established Church of England and Virginia, was organized in West Virginia many years before the war for Independence. But there was toleration, and various denominations had seated churches and gathered congregations in these parishes long before the Revolution.